

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS IN SURGERY. By T. E. Nealon, Jr. Third Edition. (Pp xi + 383. £11.75). Philadelphia, London, Toronto: Saunders and Eastbourne; Holt-Saunders. 1979.

THIS is the third edition of an American book written for housemen and surgical trainees and it will inevitably be compared with the well-known British equivalent—Pye's *Surgical Handcraft*.

The book is beautifully produced and well illustrated covering a wide field of surgical activity from the tying of knots to cancer chemotherapy. The clarity of the description and illustration of minor surgical procedures is admirable though not always entirely up to date. For example, there is no mention of anal dilation or the application of rubber bands in the treatment of piles, and I wonder how many British surgeons use the Miller Abbot tube today. There is no mention of the existence of specially prepared intercostal drains and introducers in the emergency management of chest injuries. I for one deplore the advice to the theatre nurse that when the surgeon "extends his hand the instrument should be slapped firmly into his palm" How uncomfortable!

The houseman or SHO will ask for guidance before purchasing this book or its British equivalent. This book is better bound, shorter and better illustrated. It is a single author work and this makes it much more readable. I definitely recommend it as an excellent buy for the young aspiring surgeon and suggest that a copy could well be held in every general surgical ward or casualty department.

DIABETES MELLITUS. By M. I. Drury. (Pp viii + 125. £4.25). Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1979.

THIS short textbook by a distinguished Dublin physician and endocrinologist provides a clear and succinct account of diabetes mellitus. It is written for general physicians and for specialists, in other fields, caring for diabetic patients but senior students and postgraduates will also find it helpful and illuminating. Dr. Drury writes attractively and expresses himself clearly and concisely. The book is thoroughly up-to-date and covers all aspects of the disease and its management. Each chapter ends with a useful selection of references for further reading. These are well chosen and will provide the reader with a good lead into the vast literature on the subject.

Dr. Drury's philosophy for the care of diabetic patients is so close to my own that there is nothing to criticise. Perhaps he could have afforded a little more space to the management of the patient with insulin for it is often in this area that the inexperienced need most guidance.

Dr. Drury deserves our thanks and congratulations for producing an excellent short textbook which can be thoroughly recommended. It provides sound guidance for the non-specialist caring for diabetics and it is a first class introduction to the subject for the postgraduate rotating through a metabolic unit during his period of general professional training.

D.A.D.M.

THE PHYSIOLOGICAL BASIS OF PHYSIOTHERAPY. By A. W. Sloan, MD, FRCP. (Pp 486, illustrated. £7.95). London: Balliere, Tindall. 1979.

PROFESSOR Sloan is professor of Physiology at the University of Cape Town and Consultant Physiologist to the Groote Schuur Hospital. His text is an attempt to relate normal human physiology to the disorders of function responsible for the commoner diseases encountered in the practice of medicine. It is based on the lecture course he gives for students of physiotherapy, occupational therapy and nursing at the University of Cape Town. A basic knowledge of human anatomy is assumed. The biochemistry content is cut to the minimum needed to understand the physiology presented in the text.

After dealing with some aspects of general physiology, Prof. Sloan describes each physiological system in turn. Though it is designed as an introductory text, the book contains a very detailed vocabulary and a remarkable amount of detail. The elementary student might find so much detail confusing since it is presented in a rather didactic fashion and not much attempt is made to explain physiological phenomena in terms of general principles. However, it could be argued that a student should learn the details first so that he can learn the general principles at a later date. I would not subscribe myself to that theory and would therefore find the book a little dull. Nevertheless it may be suitable for the readers the author has in mind.

I.C.R.